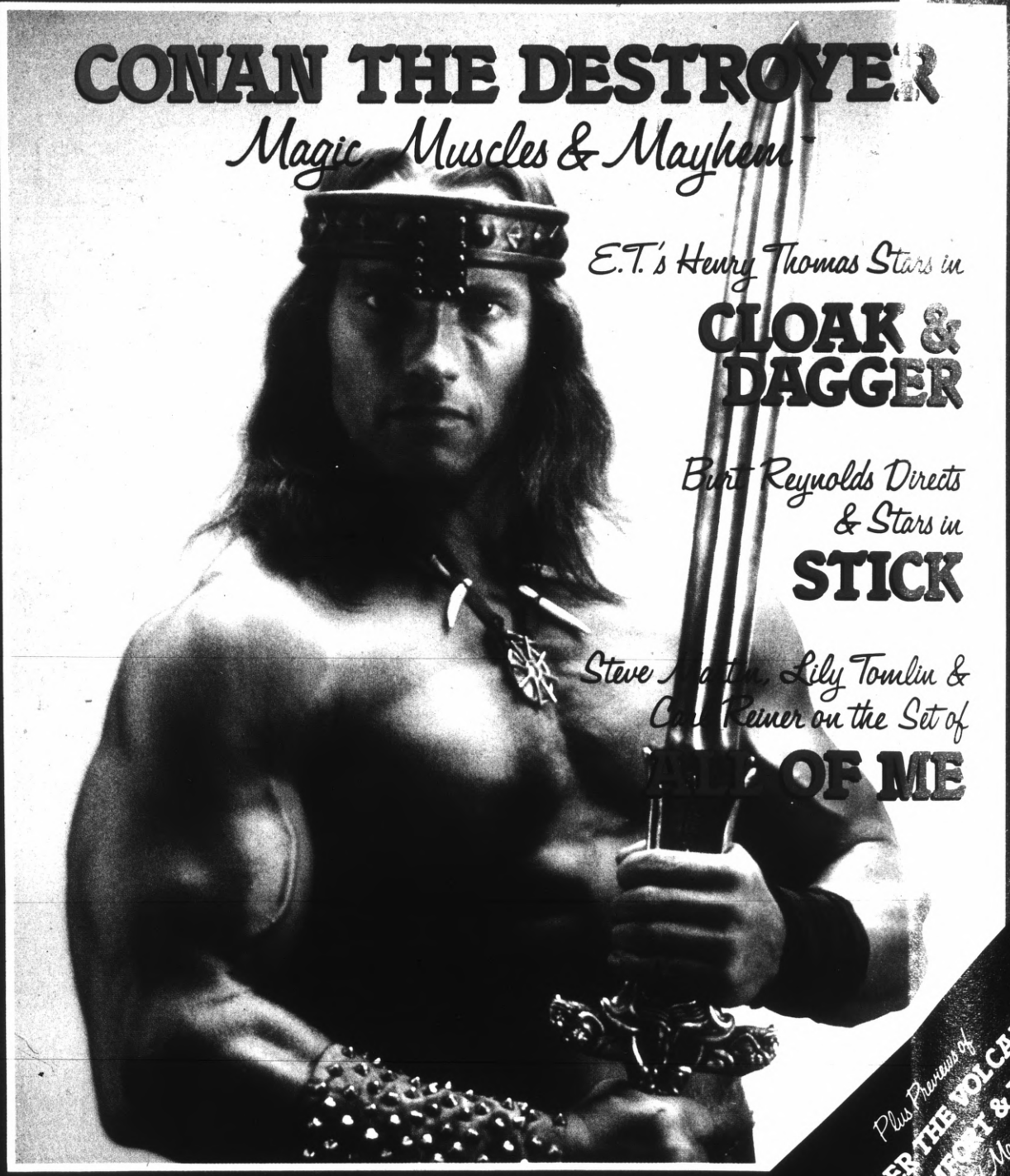
THE MOVIE MAGAZINE



CONAN THE DESTROYER

Magic, Muscles & Mayhem

E.T.'s Henry Thomas Stars in

CLOAK & DAGGER

Burt Reynolds Directs & Stars in

STICK

Steve Martin, Lily Tomlin & Carl Reiner on the Set of

ALL OF ME

Plus, Previews of
UNDER THE VOLCANO,
COMFORT & JOY
& More!

SUMMER 1984 VOL II, NO. 3

"I MIGHT GET WORKED UP. BUT I DON'T GET FILLED UP!"

John Madden

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letters

I saw the trailer for *Streets of Fire* the last time I went to the theater and it was great. In fact, it was better than the movie I originally went to see (which was a real bomb). You can bet I'll be the first in line when it comes to Phoenix. Michael Paré is too cute!

Tracy Markman
Phoenix, AZ

I was happy to read your feature on Molly Ringwald: ever since I saw *The Tempest* I've been waiting for her next movie, and *Sixteen Candles* sounds like a good one.

Gerald Gortner
Durham, NC

Another Stephen King movie. I don't think I'm ready for *Firestarter*, but I must admit the idea of George C. Scott pursuing little Drew Barrymore is rather perversely appealing.

Marian Sellers
Davis, CA

What a treat! I've been madly in love with Jenilee Harrison ever since she wiggled onto *Three's Company*.

My only complaint: Her *Tank* interview wasn't long enough.

S.D.G.
Atlanta, GA

Send letters to* The Movie Magazine, *1680 N. Vine, Suite 900, Hollywood, CA 90028.

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CONAN THE DESTROYER

Arnold Schwarzenegger (above) throws his weight around.

ALL OF ME

Steve Martin (left) is invaded by Lily Tomlin in this romantic comedy.

STICK

Burt Reynolds stars in Elmore Leonard's tale of murder in Miami.

CLOAK & DAGGER

Henry Thomas and Dabney Coleman combine forces in a fantasy/espionage adventure set in San Antonio.

UNDER THE VOLCANO

Jacqueline Bisset (below) and Albert Finney star in John Huston's film of Malcolm Lowry's classic.

PREVIEWS

Writer/producer Cameron Crowe talks about The Wild Life; *director Bill Forsyth discusses his latest,* Comfort and Joy; *Molly Ringwald stars in* The Breakfast Club.

OUR COVER

Arnold Schwarzenegger photographed by Dirck Halstead.

Wasted youth in **The Wild Life** *(l. to r.) Jenny Wright, Christopher Penn, Lea Thompson, Ilan-Mitchell Smith and Eric Stoltz.*

The Wild Life

BY BYRON LAURSEN

"I think what they're gonna get is better than Fast Times," asserts Cameron Crowe between on-location takes for his new movie, **The Wild Life,** in the hallways of Torrance High School, south of Los Angeles.

Crowe is a fast mover. Published in *Rolling Stone* at age 15, he went on to authorship of a best-seller — **Fast Times at Ridgemont High** — plus a hit screenplay based on that same book. But he takes enough time to be certain he gets his point across. **The Wild Life,** whose characters are taking their first steps away from home and school, into the charms and pitfalls of swinging singlehood, is definitely not a sequel to **Fast Times.**

Pressure has been on Crowe, who wrote the script of **The Wild Life** and is also working as a co-producer on the movie, to come up with a very similar movie to his earlier opus — heavy on antics and high school subculture. "A group of theatre owners even sent in a petition to the studio," Crowe says, "begging them to have us make **Fast Times II.** But I wanted to move forward, to take some growing-up steps and I assume a slightly different focus.

"The **Wild Life** is an offshoot, sure, but it's also a more real. I think this has something of a **Diner** feel for a younger group of kids."

The main characters of **The Wild Life,** as played by Eric Stoltz and Christopher Penn, are a guy who just got his first apartment and found out he can't afford it alone, and his choice for a roommate, a "self-appointed love god and party connoisseur," who failed to graduate with his buddies.

Penn, the younger brother of memorable **Fast Times** star Sean Penn, stars in the current hit **Footloose** and was also in **All the Right Moves** and **Rumblefish.** "He's a more physical actor, a lot more extroverted than his brother," says Crowe. "He plays a guy who changes all the lives around him without knowing what he's doing."

The changes materialize during an intense week, the first week of the summer vacation following Stoltz and Penn's senior year. It's the time — as it was for the characters in the classic **American Grafitti** — to step over the line from childhood to adulthood. "This film is about the 'small' moments in their lives that have monumental effects." Crowe explains.

Other stars include Randy Quaid (of **Breaking Away** and **Diner** fame) and Ilan Mitchell-Smith ("He's our Win-A-Date-With character," Crowe jokes, "a super good-looking young guy"), along with Lea Thompson **(All the Right Moves),** Jenny Wright, Hart Bochner (who played, in **Rich and Famous,** a writer loosely based on Crowe himself) and Rick Moranis, recently in *SCTV*'s popular "Great White North" series of sketches. Art Linson is the director and a co-producer with Crowe and Don Phillips.

The Wild Life opens this fall.

Comfort and Joy

BY JOAN GOODMAN

Tidings of *Comfort and Joy* will be welcome news to followers of Scots director Bill Forsyth's "wee small films" — *Local Hero, Gregory's Girl,* and his recently released 16 mm first effort, *That Sinking Feeling.* He's reluctant to talk about *Comfort and Joy* except to say "it's about a fella having a really bad week. It begins on a Sunday and ends the following Saturday and it's quite unusual. Everything happens to him. It's really a tough week he has . . ." says the sly, canny, eccentric humorist who currently constitutes the whole of the Scottish film industry.

"Maybe I'm being too paranoid about it, but it's because the story is so slight. If there were more story, I'd be quite happy to talk about it. But if people know what it's about before they see it, they won't enjoy the film," he says gloomily. The cinematically cheerful Forsyth has his own down side in reality. He can sound suicidal about the most casual pitfalls of filmmaking. It takes enormous effort to convince him that disaster is not about to strike. It took the British Academy Award for Best Screenplay (beating out *Chariots of Fire*) to convince him that *Gregory's Girl* was not an utter failure, and the New York Film Critic's Best Screenplay Award for *Local Hero* cheered him up considerably. True to his nature, he only seemed nonplussed when *Local Hero* was nominated for 7 British Academy Awards.

Forsyth, a lean, compact Glaswegian of doleful mein, whose shoulders seem permanently hunched in worry, comes by his pessimism honestly. Like the British, the Scots are at their best when their backs are to the wall. "We have difficulty coping with success," Forsyth says, grinning cheerfully.

(Continued on page 13)

***In* Comfort and Joy,** *Scottish disc jockey Billy Paterson is abandoned by his girlfriend, leaving lonely Billy to wander around Glasgow in his spiffy BMW — in optimistic pursuit of a mysterious woman.*

Henry Thomas draws a bead on the bad guys.

BY JOHN MENDELSSOHN

His first role since *E.T.* made him American moviegoers' favorite young actor finds young Henry Thomas foiling dastardly spies, learning something about the True Nature of Heroism, and otherwise having a grand, grand old time in *Cloak and Dagger.* Written by Tom Holland, the film goes back to the 1947 Cornell Woolrich nailbiter *The Window.* In fact, *Cloak* was conceived as a straight remake of the Woolrich film, about a boy whose penchant for crying wolf almost costs him his neck. But then director Richard Franklin, fresh from *Psycho II*, noticed that it "never really established why no one will help the little boy, who seemed quite a nice kid.

"On the other hand, in a more traditional boy-who-cried-wolf story," the Australian filmmaker explains to a visitor in his office, "one would have had to establish the boy's lack of credibility. And that would have been sort of dull filmmaking.

"I was pondering all this when I met Henry for the first time, and found him playing Dungeons and Dragons. His mother said something that just sort of solved everything. 'You know,' she said, 'Henry's so into these games that sometimes we don't know when he's talking about reality and when he's talking about a game he's playing.'

"'Well, my God,' I thought, *'there's* the way to get around the basic problem of the story.'" And thus was born a property that makes only "nodding reference" to that of which it was originally intended to be a mere modernization.

Directing the wee Mr. Thomas proved an eye-opening experience for Franklin, who admits, "I had felt that acting, like directing — I don't want to appear to be putting acting down, mind you — was a craft, something that one had to study and learn. Aside from one's good looks or something, it hadn't seemed to have much to do with talent. But Henry really changed my mind about that.

"He does something I've never seen any other actor do — learns his lines only when it's time to do the scene. Only after a scene's been blocked will he come over and look at his script to find out what he's meant to say in it. Bringing no preconceptions to the scene, he believes what you tell him and does exactly what you ask him to do."

But malleability is only one of the many things about Henry that make directors like Franklin, (who'll be familiar to some as the co-producer of *The Blue Lagoon*) so frightfully fond of him. "He was able to express the most complex emotions too," the director tells us. "We did two scenes, for instance, in which he cried on cue. His mother told me that he has certain things that he thinks of to put himself in the mood, but I didn't ask what they were. I just asked him, 'Do you think you can cry here?' and he said yes, and did!"

The ubiquitous Dabney Coleman, who plays both Henry's grievously put-upon dad and his imagined accomplice in bad-guy-thwarting, Jack Flack, superspy, is hardly less enthusiastic in his praise of his fellow Texan. "The nuances that Henry puts in his performance are astounding," he asserts. "I haven't seen many child actors as adept as he. And, more importantly, he's a good kid."

Franklin perceives Coleman's approach to acting as the complete opposite of his little costar. "Dabney's a very . . . caring actor," he notes, "one who works very hard at *everything*, really labors over what and why and where and how. He'd ask for

(Continued on page 1

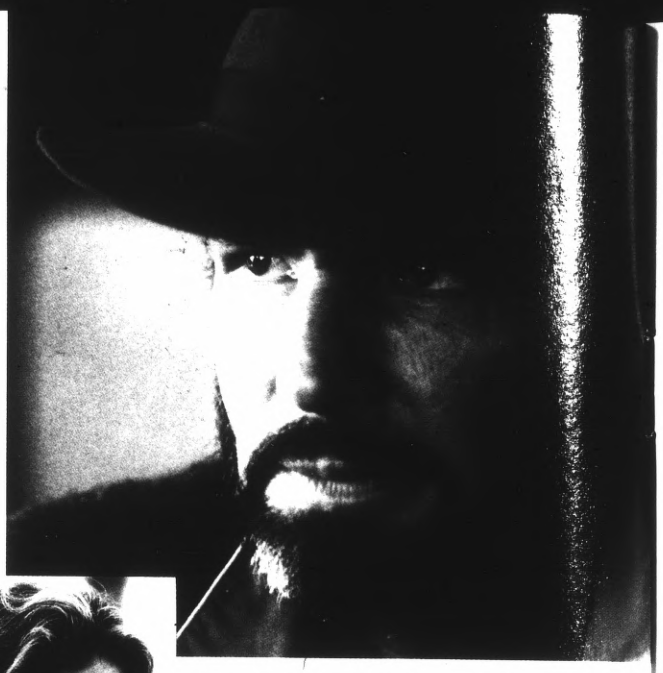
Australian director Richard Franklin* (Psycho II) *rehearses a scene with Thomas and Christina Nigra.

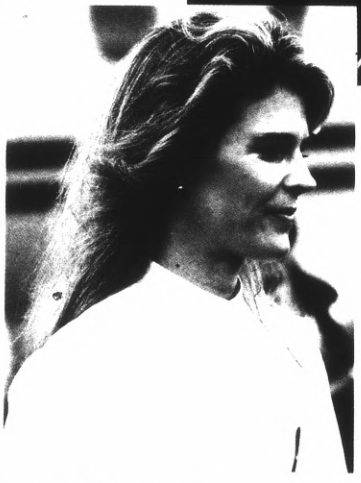
BURT REYNOLDS IS STICK

Drugs, Sex & Murder in Miami

BY R. SUE SMITH

***Box Office King Burt Reynolds' 1984 bid for acclaim in the dual roles of Actor/Director calls for a vehicle more powerful than the Trans-Am Bandit used to out-fox Smokey; he may have found that slick ride with Elmore Leonard's* Stick.**





Director/star Reynolds (above) as Stick, just out of prison and about to fall in with a dangerous crowd, including stock market consultant Candice Bergen (left) and weirdo drug dealer Charles Durning (below, with April Clough).* Stick *is based on one of "23 or 24" novels by ace action writer Elmore Leonard (below left), who places most of his stories in Detroit and/or Miami.

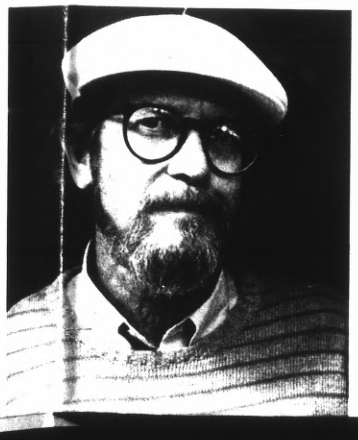
Based on Leonard's best-selling action novel, and produced by veteran Jennings Lang, *Stick* boasts a first-rate cast: Gilt-edged actors supporting the star (in the title role of Ernest "Stick" Stickley) include George Segal, Candice Bergen, Charles Durning, Annie Potts, Jose Perez, Richard Lawson, and in her screen debut, Sachi Parker (daughter of Shirley MacLaine).

Stick was crafted for the screen from Detroit-based Leonard's "23rd or 24th" published novel, and as the author explains, he's no rookie at making the page-to-screen doubleplay, having "relied for most of my career on Hollywood sales."

The 57-year-old Leonard outlined his career and his hopes for *Stick* in a recent conversation in his Birmingham, Michigan home office, where afternoon sun played across the covers of his collected works and the pages of his current manuscript. Leonard seems to be living every writer's dream — typewriter to the left, antique writing desk to the right, Adidas-shod feet comfortably propped alongside letters from publishers and agents, he talks with the ease of a man who has not only found his niche but is being paid to stay there.

That 31-year-old career began with a string of Western novels, most notably Martin Ritt's 1967 filming of *Hombre*, which starred Paul Newman and is "an extraordinary landmark in the development of the Western" according to international film scholar Phillip French.

Leonard made the switch to contemporary stories ("They're a lot more fun") in the early Seventies with his screenplays for Charles Bronson's *Mr. Majestyk* and Clint Eastwood's *Joe Kidd*. While Leonard's novels are praised for their tightly-knit plotting, the author shakes his head at the idea that he begins each book with a fully-developed story line. "I don't really plot," he says. "I just go along from day to day. Plot isn't the main thing. It's the characters and what comes of their conflict."



The character of Ernest Stickley — "Stick" — was introduced in Leonard's 1976 novel *Swag*, which detailed Stick's 100-day career in armed robbery. *Stick* picks up seven years from where *Swag* left off, years Stick spent doing time for a final botched crime.

The action begins as Stick rolls off a southbound boxcar into a Florida Coast society possibly seamier than that he left behind in the pen. Stick's idea of a media hero is Warren Oates, not Hemingway, but he's about to learn something that proves "Papa" right. A chance meeting with Puerto Rican emigre Rene "Rainy" Moya plunges Stick into a high stakes world where over-the-counter Wall Street investments mix with under-the-table drug deals. Rainy agrees to act as bagman for wigged-out superdealer Charles "Chucky Buck" Gorman (Durning in a red fright wig), taking Stick along for the ride. When the assignment turns out to be a prearranged negotiated murder, with Stick as Chucky's sacrificial offering to a fellow dealer, Stick becomes a wanted man running from Chucky and from the assassins.

What the underworld hit men don't know is that Stick doesn't take to being set up. It goes against his grain as a businessman. And when Stick runs, it's in circles that lead the pursuers into Stick's trap.

Shelter comes from an unexpected offer. Multimillionaire Barry Stam (Segal) needs two assistants to maintain his fast-lane life: lovely financial wizard Kyle McLaren (Ber-

(Continued on page 14)

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STEVE MARTIN & LILY TOMLIN

together in rare form

BY ERIC ESTRIN & RICK McGUIRE

Lily Tomlin as Edwina Cutwater, a very rich spinster with a terminal disease, who arranges to transfer her soul to the body of a beautiful young woman — but the trick switch doesn't click and Lily ends up inside bumbling playboy lawyer Steve Martin; one side of Steve swaggers manfully, while the other side minces primly. No wonder Steve is confused. . . .

Having one actor play two or more roles is one of Hollywood's favorite (and most predictable) plot twists. Leave it to the particularly crazed bent of Steve Martin and Carl to turn this cliché around and offer ers in the *same* role.

All o Me, Steve Martin and Lily Tomare more than the lead; they also end inhabiting the same body.

ily portrays Edwina Cutwater, a prim d proper spinster who decides, on her eathbed, that if you can't take it with you, don't go. She hires a mystic to transplant her soul into the body of a beautiful young woman. The bizarre plan would have worked, too, if Edwina's inept lawyer, Roger Cobb (Steve Martin), hadn't bumbled into the ceremony.

The mystic's aim is a little off and — ZAP! — Roger finds himself and this old eccentric *really* living together. Of course, since she's so stilted and repressed and he's so horny and uninhibited, neither would really call it living. But it certainly can be called a funny movie.

Unfortunately, Steve Martin is not laughing. Oh, the film is going well; it's his between-scenes gin game that's ailing. His opponent, the screenplay's writer, Phil Alden Robinson *(Rhinestone)*, says, "I take Steve for about ten bucks a week." Meanwhile, Martin just keeps muttering,"Where are the nines? Did I pass a king?"

"It's very hard for Steve," says director Carl Reiner. "He's a real card shark, but he's working with a handicap; he's not allowed to cheat."

Reiner himself has been working with a bit of a handicap. Previously having directed Martin in *The Jerk, Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid*, and *The Man with Two Brains*, he claims, "It's been very difficult, because if you do one picture with a guy like Steve, well that's one thing, but *four* — that's purgatory!"

Based on the novel *Me Two*, with an adaptation by Henry Olek, the story line itself has also been troublesome. How do you handle the logistics of two people sharing one body? After much debate, it was finally agreed that each controls a different side of the body. Thus, Martin has developed an ingenious walk whereby his left side moves with a feminine swish while his right stalks around in a masculine fashion.

This "split-personality" creates a variety of hazards, whether the hapless lawyer is tooling around town with his stick shift, trying to use the men's room, or attempting to seduce his decidedly bewildered fiancée.

Visually, he sees Edwina whenever he looks in the mirror. This particular special effect demands the set be decorated with a number of fake mirrors, which Reiner habitually catches himself trying to use.

"But I do it," he says defiantly, "despite all the problems. I mean, I was in the war with Hitler; I've learned to live with disaster."

While no major disasters occurred during the filming of *All of Me*, there were occasional events guaranteeing some excitement around the set. Costar Madolyn Smith (who plays Martin's fiancee) took the traditional good-luck admonishment to "break a leg" seriously — she'll be on crutches for about six months. Martin caught the brim of a thrown hat with his eye and required a weekend's recovery time.

But what could have been the biggest disaster of all never materialized. Instead of the star wars which might be expected when two major celebrities share the same stage, Martin and Tomlin worked well together. Robinson says the two, who never performed with each other outside of brief *Saturday Night Live* sketches, have become great friends: "Our first rehearsal was at Steve's house. After ten minutes, Lily was down on the floor, saying, 'Oh, Steve, why don't you do this?' and he'd say, 'That's great, and you could do this!'"

"We have magical timing together," says

(Continued on page 14)

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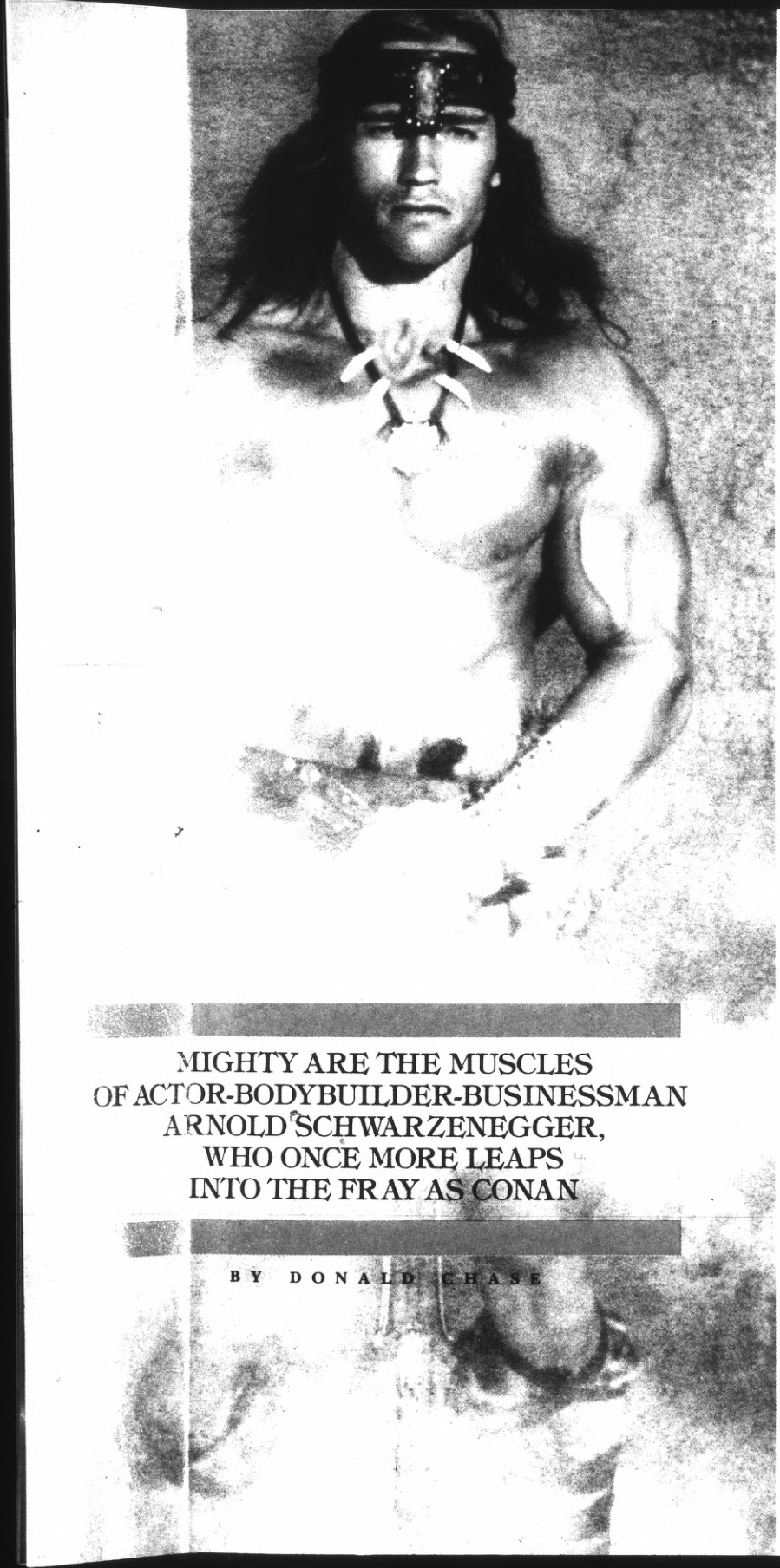

THE DES

PLAY IT AGA

MIGHTY ARE THE MUSCLES OF ACTOR-BODYBUILDER-BUSINESSMAN ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, WHO ONCE MORE LEAPS INTO THE FRAY AS CONAN

BY DONALD CHASE

Arnold Schwarzenegger, just returned from the Mexico City doctor who treated him for a minor leg injury, is both wincing in pain and laughing at the same time. In fact, he is laughing because, back among his coworkers at Churubusco Studios, he is finally in a situation where he *can* wince without suffering a loss of face.

"In the waiting room and even while I was with the doctor," he explains in a voice from which the accents of his native Austria are fast fading, "I felt I was really being watched. 'How is this macho bodybuilder, how is the fearless Conan, handling himself?' And I didn't want to disappoint anybody, so I just acted as if I never felt better."

The macho bodybuilder, five times Mr. Universe and seven times Mr. Olympia, sustained his injury while playing the fearless hero of *Conan the Destroyer*, the sequel to his 1982 smash *Conan the Barbarian*. It happened on the final day of filming a scene in which Schwarzenegger and basketball great Wilt Chamberlain pummel, slash, and bite each other to a fare-thee-well. (During the biting, the overzealous Chamberlain, who is making his film debut as a villain, was begged by Schwarzenegger, "Wilt, the camera doesn't know if you're *really* biting my ear. So please — stop biting it and just pretend.") It's one of many scenes — including ambushes, swordfights, and horseback stunts — that continue the gory, treacherous and somewhat mystical tradition of the first film.

"The bottom line is pretty much the same in both films," Schwarzenegger admits. "Conan is good and he destroys evil. In this case, evil is the monster created by Queen Tamaris (played by Sarah Douglas, the black-clad villainess Ursa in *Superman* and *Superman II*, and the Joan Collins-type on TV's *Falcon Crest*). It's called Dagoth — it's a marble statue that comes alive when she plants a magical horn in its forehead." The quest for the horn, which is joined by a black Amazonian warrior (played by rock singer Grace Jones) and a beautiful fairytale princess (played by Olivia D'Abo), comprises the film's plot.

What's new about *Conan the Destroyer*, screenplay by Stanley Mann, story by Roy Thomas and Gerry Conway, is its sense of humor, partly an attempt by producer Raffaella DeLaurentiis to temper the film's violence in order to get a PG rating. "That way," DeLaurentiis says, "it can be seen by the millions of kids who complained that they couldn't get in to see *Conan the Barbarian* because of its R rating."

The humor, says Schwarzenegger, is also partly the difference between John Milius, the director of the original, and Richard

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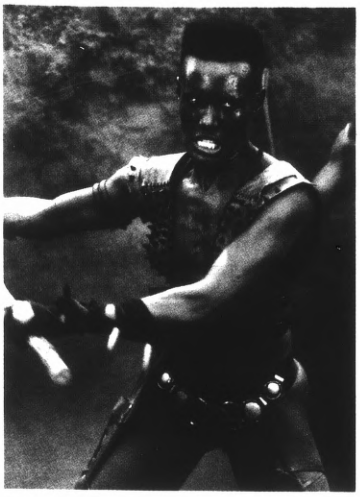


Singer Grace Jones (left) and basketball star Wilt Chamberlain make their acting debuts as tough warriors who do battle with Conan. It all has to do with a blonde princess being held against her will, said princess being in need of rescue (ah, rescue . . .).

Fleischer, director of the sequel. Milius, a "very sweet, gentle man" offscreen, could get rather heavily philosophical onscreen, as in the allegedly right-wing quote from Neitzsche that opened the film: "That which does not kill you makes you stronger." Milius' intentions were best served by directing Schwarzenegger "step by step through scenes." With Fleischer, "the approach is much lighter," Schwarzenegger says, and for that reason and because his star is now that much more experienced in the role of Conan, the director "lets you have a certain responsibility. He'll watch you first and then iron out a few things — or say nothing at all."

Richard Fleischer, whose impressive credits in the action-adventure vein include *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, *The Vikings*, and *Fantastic Voyage*, says that *Conan the Destroyer* will have a "kind of *Three Musketeers* feeling. We're going to see Arnold play a very funny drunk scene, there will be jokes that relate back to the first film but which can be enjoyed even if you don't know the first film. And there's some almost tongue-in-cheek humor that takes off on Arnold's fantastic body and fantastic strength."

At 220 pounds, Schwarzenegger is 20 pounds lighter and proportionately smaller in every dimension than he was when he was a competing bodybuilder. His body is also more muscular and better defined than it was when he made the first *Conan* — though he hasn't sacrificed the strength, flexibility, speed, and endurance needed to perform the new film's many stunts.

"John Milius," he explains, "said that slave labor doesn't give you definition, and for his relatively realistic film, a less defined body was right. But Richard Fleischer wanted the definition, so my waist is smaller here and I reduced my body-fat level by 2 or 3 percent. He's making more of an adventure-fantasy and in terms of that he's right."

The adventure-fantasy aspects of *Conan*, which opens July 6, are being played to the hilt by Jack Cardiff, the world-renowned cinematographer who has shot *The Red Shoes*, *The African Queen*, and Fleischer's *The Vikings*, among scores of films. "If there's anything in the film that sparkles," he laughs, "it *sparkles*. I'm using special filters on the sets to make them sparkle. I'm using every trick in the book to produce all kinds of strange atmospheric conditions. What we're aiming for is a savage splendor."

Some of the splendor will come from sets erected at Churubusco by production designer Pierluigi Basile to represent royal palaces of the mythical Hyborean Age, and from the "Dreaming god" Dagoth, the work of Carlo Rambaldi, famed for creating E.T. While working on Dagoth, Rambaldi is simultaneously putting the finishing touches on his special effects contributions to Raffaella DeLaurentiis' *Dune*.

It was while scouting *Dune* locations that the producer saw the first of the several terrains that would give *Conan the Destroyer* the savagery it required. This was the Salamayuca Desert surrounding Ciudad Juarez, where she ended up shooting portions of both *Dune* and *Conan*. Other Mexican exterior locations used in *Conan* include an enormous waterfall near Pachuca that pours over hexagonal columns of white basalt rock; a preindustrial and thus ageless silver mill, also near Pachuca, to play the exterior of Queen Tamaris' palace; and, at Nevada de Toluca, an extinct volcano holding a black lake in its crater, used as the approach to the castle of the archvillain Thoth-Amon (Patrick Roach).

The devaluation of the Mexican peso, along with the already low cost of Mexican labor and materials, may make *Conan the Destroyer* more savagely splendid than its filmed-in-Spain predecessor. And for some $3 million less than the $19.7 million spent on *Conan the Barbarian*. This is not exactly lost on Arnold Schwarzenegger, because it probably won't be too long before he himself starts packaging and producing movies. It's a natural extension of acting in them, he feels. It's also probably an endeavor marked for success, if Schwarzenegger's track record with spinoffs is any indication. In addition to his film-acting career, which began in 1976 with *Stay Hungry*, Schwarzenegger's bodybuilding prowess has edged him into appearing in and producing exercise tapes and TV specials and spawned three bestselling books.

In fact, the bodybuilding spinoffs account for just a fraction of Schwarzenegger's current business empire. Having studied economics and business in Munich and at UCLA and the University of Wisconsin, he is involved, through seven corporations, in buying, selling, developing, trading, renting and leasing Southern California commercial and residential property.

"There is nothing you do today that doesn't have something to do with business," he says, "and it's foolish not to acquaint yourself with the business aspects of whatever you do, if only to protect yourself from being taken advantage of. But more than that, I enjoy business. I wouldn't do any of the things I do if I didn't enjoy them. I'm not saying that everyone should be as aggressive and competitive as I am, because if they were it would be tougher for me!"

What he is saying, however, is that everyone should go to the edge of their personal limits at any given time and then expand those limits. "It's a question of setting a goal very clearly. If you have a vision of what you want — what kind of body, what kind of career — you will find yourself casually, almost subconsciously, making decisions on a day-to-day basis that will bring you closer to it."

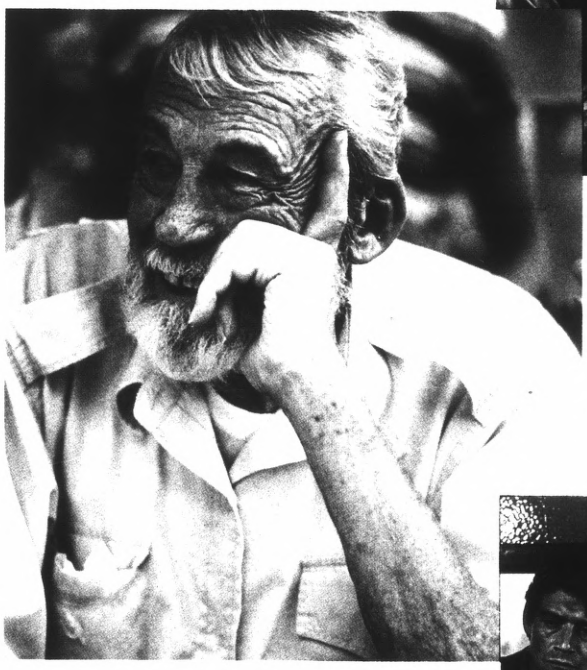
Schwarzenegger's belief in an expanding personal universe seemed to find official expression last September when he achieved a long-sought goal. After much negotiation, he managed to become a citizen of the United States, which he loves for its "openheartedness, openmindedness, and big thinking," while remaining a citizen of Austria, to which he has a native's ties of affection.

"Arnold strives always to do better than he's done before," says Fleischer. "That's how he became what he became. He's a very ambitious man but not a driven man . . . As an actor, he's not at all self-conscious. He endeavors to do his best in every shot — he's giving 110 percent all the time . . . This film is going to surprise a lot of people."

ALBERT FINNEY, ACQUELINE BISSET & ANTHONY ANDREWS IN JOHN HUSTON'S

NDER THE VOLCANO

BY JACOBA ATLAS



Anthony Andrews **(Brideshead Revisited)** *gives his alcoholic half-brother (Albert Finney) a shave (above) in the long-awaited film version of Malcolm Lowry's classic existential novel. The director, John Huston (left), feels particularly qualified for this project. Jacqueline Bisset (bottom right and below center) plays the ex-wife of former British consul Finney.*

-seven-year-old di- fo n Huston is talking *Under the Volcano*, Mal- ow y's 1947 novel, which ow turning into a film g Albert Finney, Jac- ne Bisset and Anthony ews produced by Moritz man nd Wieland Schulz- el, with Michael Fitzgerald as executive producer of the Michael and Kathy Fitzgerald Presentation). *Under the Volcano* has been called the novel Huston was destined to film. Something in the novel's theme, of a civilization crumbling from within each man's soul, speaks to Huston's own life. "For a number of years teachers at universities, scholars and students have connected me with this novel," he says modestly.

Under the Volcano, as written by Lowry, is mostly an internal monologue conducted by a British ex-Consul who is consumed with alcohol, mourning the estrangement of his wife and cursing his soul. The novel takes place within twenty-four hours on November 1 — Mexico's Day of the Dead. The year is 1938; Europe is about to embark on a horrible war, and the Consul, like the protagonists of Camus and Sartre, is trying to come to terms with epic despair. This internal story, which jumps time and place at will, has been refashioned (by screenwriter Guy Gallo) into a linear form with a concrete beginning, middle and end. It is Huston's only concession to commercial filmmaking. "The Consul is a hero," Huston insists. "His reaction to life is to get drunk. He gets drunk in a heroic way. I prefer to think that God is not dead, just drunk. He took one look at what's going on in this world and left on an extended trip to another constellation. It's very clear that the man (Consul) suffers from the schizophrenia of the soul. His drunkenness is not simply a response to being betrayed by his wife, it is actually a manner of perceiving the world, a response to a disappointment in western civilization."

That theme has at one time or another attracted some of the finest moviemakers in the world. The list of those who tried, and failed, to turn Lowry's novel into a movie is impressive: Luis Buñuel, Joseph Losey, Jules Dassin, Ken Russell, Roman Polanski, Stanley Kubrick. The actors who saw the Consul as their own alter-ego are equally stellar: Richard Burton (he saw the Consul as a way to re-establish his acting mettle), Peter O'Toole, even Jack Nicholson. "Before Albert," explains Huston, "the role belonged to Burton." He will not elaborate on why Burton lost in the final round to Finney.

Finney came to Cuernavaca, Mexico directly from playing Pope John-Paul for a CBS television movie. He shaved his head to play the Pope and now, portraying the Consul, he wears a wig. Other than that, he is completely without artifice. "I can't live up to the despair of the Consul," he admits, "and imagination has to take over. The love story aspect — well, one can draw on one's own experiences there. The times when one has been disappointed, or felt inadequate. Now in terms of his self-destruction, I've only flirted with it. I understand it, though. Perhaps I've never had a volcano, but I've had my own little hummocks of self destruction. It's a pretty common feeling, that life is worthless. What I try to do is get to the edge of that in my imagination. Try to catch the darkness."

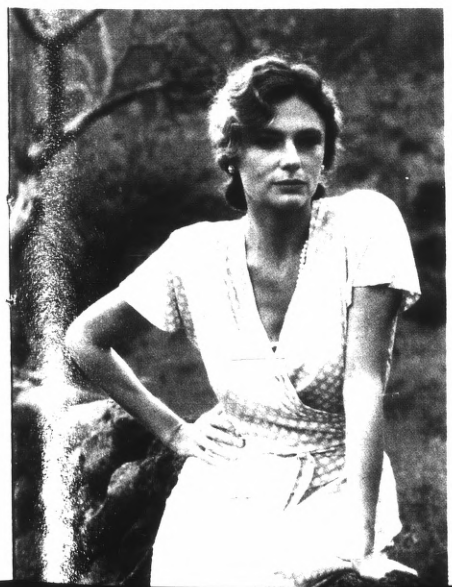
It's Finney as much as Huston who sets the mood for the filming. His costars — Jacqueline Bisset, who plays his wife, and Anthony Andrews, who plays his half-brother — are slightly in awe of Finney's powers of creation. Andrews has responded with slight competitiveness, trying to capture Huston's attention; Bisset with quiet determination. Huston speaks gently to her, patting her hand and calling her "dear." This is probably the most demanding role of her career and she knows it. Huston has become something of her mentor. "When we first met in Mexico," she says with a smile, "he gave me a long list of books I should read. I'm hopelessly ill-read." Bisset says this is the first time the director has actually worked with her, de-

spite the 1972 film *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean*. "I don't know where John was on that," she says vaguely, "but my scenes were mostly directed by Paul Newman."

On *Under the Volcano*, Huston is very much in evidence. To conserve his energy, he moves about the locations in a golf cart and views takes on a video monitor. But he directs with a "hands on" attitude, touching his actors, speaking in his low, soothing voice. Working entirely in Mexico suits his temperament; it served as the backdrop for two of his favorite films, *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948) and *The Night of the Iguana* (1966). "There's an element of adventure in Mexico," he explains. "The country's exotic. I first came here when I was 18. There were still leftovers from the revolution. I like the people, the variety, the way they think." He is working with Mexico's top cinematographer, Gabriel Figueroa, and says the Mexican crews are "among the finest in the world."

Each night at the Cuernavaca Racquet Club — the hotel that serves as the production's home base — everyone is welcome to view what was shot that day. Actors, crew, friends and relatives, even the gardener from the Racquet Club, gather in a front room and watch what was put on film. There's no hierarchy, no privileged information. Young directors in Hollywood may jealously guard their dailies, but Huston knows that his film can't be copied: he's putting his 77 years of living on that screen. The film will open this fall.

UNDER the VOLCANO



COMFORT & JOY

(Continued from page 4)

"The Scots have survived on failure for so long that when one is successful he feels he has to leave the country." He intends to be the exception.

The protagonist of *Comfort and Joy* is an aging disc jockey whose girlfriend suddenly leaves him. Finding himself on his own, he tools around the depressed areas of Glasgow in his bright red BMW. He follows a girl in an ice cream van and finds himself involved in an ice cream war between Scottish Italians of a somewhat sinister caste. In his fall from innocence and his pursuit of the elusive, perfect woman, the disc jockey learns just a little about himself — and we learn a lot about Bill Forsyth.

Heading the cast of *Comfort and Joy*, which opens this fall, is Billy Paterson, a well-known Scottish actor who lives in London and who came to Forsyth eight years ago when he and his partner were making industrial films. "'Why don't you make *film* films,' he said, 'so I can be in them?' It's taken me all this time." Finding good Scottish actors isn't a problem, Forsyth maintains. "Most of the actors in London come from Glasgow, although they don't let on except to another Scot. It's the only way they can survive," he says.

In fact, most of *Comfort and Joy* was cast in Glasgow by Susie Figgis, one of London's premiere casting directors (*Gandhi*, *Local Hero*, *The Killing Fields*, *Heat and Dust* and the BBC's upcoming *Tender Is the Night*). "The problem, of course, was that Bill needed four Scottish Italians who speak English with a Glasgow accent and can speak perfect Italian. The amazing thing is that we actually found them. We needed a fiftyish guy for a leading part and I was in despair. I heard about someone who worked in a kind of supper club as a compere [Master of Ceremonies]. We went to see him there and at first we couldn't get in because Bill wasn't wearing a tie. Then suddenly they realized who he was and let us in. That's how we found Roberto Bernardi, this wonderful, wonderful man who speaks with a thick Italian accent filled with Glasgow phrases. He plays a fairly sinister character, the father of the three young men of the plot. Roberto turned out to be quite extraordinary. He has written songs, been to America where he won all the talent contests and played with Frank Sinatra. He comes off wonderfully in the film."

Figgis, whose saving grace is her sense of humor, says that although Forsyth's films present special problems, they offer greater rewards. "Like any other good director, Bill's difficult because he has a vision. It's hard to fulfill someone else's vision, but I understand Bill and we work well together." The upside, she says "is that Bill is changing in just the opposite way from most directors who become more f----d up and more paranoid as they become successful. Bill has become happier and easier."

Writer-director Bill Forsyth, looking uncomfortable (his typical manner). In spite of his discomfort, his* Local Hero *was awarded the New York Film Critics' award (best screenplay) and nominated for 7 British Academy Awards.

Forsyth agrees that his films may be therapeutic for him. "The blacker things are, the more cheerful I am." Things could hardly have been blacker eight years ago when Forsyth found himself back in Glasgow after a two-year stint at the London Film School while holding down a job as an assistant film editor at the BBC. "I was poor, and London is no place to be poor."

He began hanging around a Glasgow youth club on Friday nights and that gave him the idea for his first film, *That Sinking Feeling*, a heist film involving a plumber's warehouse. He managed to raise $10,000 and he used the amateur talent of the youth club. The film was the hit of the Edinburgh Festival that year.

The son of a plumber and a housewife, Forsyth feels more comfortable sticking to his roots. Despite his successful track record, he says his mother still worries about him. "When I made *Local Hero* I was very proud and I told her how much she was for making the film. She still w... She thought I had to pay Lancas... make the film with it as well."

Forsyth, who writes his own scre... as well as directs, admits that there ... a bit of himself in his characters. "I ... ory's Girl*, I'm the gym teacher. I ... *Hero* I used to think I was Danny. ... not sure any more. He gets aw... more than I can." And there's so... of him in the disc jockey in *Comfor*... What all these characters have in ... is the pursuit of the unattainable, ... perfect woman. "Yeah, that's true ... says the unattached director with ... humor; "my vision of not getting ... fect girl runs deep."

L OF ME

rtin with Victoria Tennant, the daughter of a stable hand — and nal destination for Lily Tomlin's

from page 8)

llowing his attention to momen- ader from the card game. "Like have to mirror-image each other; es we do things really spontane- we'll do exactly the same thing." himself that such a brilliant ob- is not wasted, he offers, "You a it to write that down."

n lays down his card and says, you were gabbing, I got a 215-point

ned shrieks and one disgruntled card k aside, the set for *All of Me* is a de- edly civil one. Although he wasn't hrilled with the way his *Rhinestone* script came to the screen, Robinson has no complaints about the handling of his latest work, which he says is being treated as a sophisticated, romantic comedy. He says they're "not getting wild and crazy" with the movie, which is wise since the premise itself is so outrageous.

Robinson also has praise for the director. "Carl's wonderful. He's very collaborative and has a respect for writers. A lot of (directors) don't want the writer in the same county with them," he notes. Throughout the six weeks of shooting, Robinson has been on the set making necessary script revisions and taking Martin's money.

"I know you can't be saving eights again," challenges Martin. "Well, you're saving eights again, I see."

Shortly after lunch, Victoria Tennant (who plays the original target for Edwina's soul) shows up. Martin's mood improves appreciably. His game isn't any better, but, outfitted in a t-shirt and boxer shorts, he grabs his banjo and begins picking out "Blue Skies" while Reiner dances around happily.

In her trailer dressing room, Tomlin isn't as jovial as her co stars, but it is no reflection of her experience on the movie. It's been a long day of shooting and reshooting some particularly emotional scenes.

Her t-shirt, in Spanish, says: "That's what the last girl said!" It's a line from *Wicked Woman*, a movie about a *bad* woman. Is Tomlin a bad woman? "I aspire."

Not too long ago, Hollywood gave her just such a label, saying she wasn't "safe" anymore. Although this is her first film in three years, Tomlin says, "People make that stuff up, you know. If anybody's the least bit different, they'll say you're unusual or something. At that time, I was different comedically."

Across the soundstage, the bloodbath continues. "Take this pig!" says Martin, finally feeling he's gotten the upper hand. Robinson does indeed take it. "You can't! Every time I discard, you're saving it!"

By mid-afternoon, Steve owes Phil $68.80. "Let's finish this game," says Martin, "then I'll pay you."

With gambling debts like that, Martin hopes *All of Me* is a hit when it opens this summer.

STICK

(Continued from page 6)

gen), and a discreet chauffeur. Stick takes the driving job, and pays attention to Stam's houseman Cornell Lewis (Lawson) who advises him to "learn something" from the country club set.

What the enterprising Stick learns from the Stam lifestyle and from Kyle's personal tutoring is enough to put together a con that saves his skin, asserts his hard-learned principles, and satisfies his newly-understood need for cash flow. But not without a little blood on the fast lane along the way.

Leonard's fast action and straightforward style draw comparisons with hard-boiled masters Hammett and Chandler. But Leonard doesn't credit *The Thin Man* or *The Big Sleep*.

"I was more influenced by James M. Cain and Hemingway," he says. "Hemingway taught me how to write. Since my attitude is different from his, thank God, my sound finally developed into my own sound." Still, he doesn't expect any of his work to emerge on film with the same tone as his books. The books are, he explains, "too true to life."

Leonard's wife Joan brings coffee and cookies — delectable morsels from a posh Birmingham bakery — while a dog as big as a Kleenex box licks any hand it can reach. Watching the action is Ernest Hemingway himself, in a framed, signed photograph.

Leonard is currently at work on a novel which could, depending on *Stick*'s success, be a sequel. Like Stick, the hero of this work-in-progress is a principled man who commits himself out of personal ethics rather than any guarantee of success. That's an action familiar to many of Leonard's heroes, who share an important common trait. "Of course they're a lot alike," Leonard agrees. "They're all me! It's like when I'm asked where I get my dialogue. That's easy. I make it up!"

The screenplay for *Stick* was written on the heels of the novel, with a short break for Leonard to begin his current best-seller, *LaBrava*. The author estimates he spent less than two months revising his screenplay before and during Reynolds' Florida shooting.

"It's not that I work fast," he explains, "but that I stay with it. I don't wander off and talk about it. I've got to be left alone. After all, I don't know what it's about. I'm having a good time making it up as I go along. I work better that way. The reader doesn't know what's going to happen if I don't know what's going to happen."

So how does he know when a book is done? "It's around page 360," he says with a smile.

Despite Leonard's "surprise me" approach to writing, he has a sure feeling for the film's success. "Right from the start it was a pleasure to work with Reynolds," Leonard says, "especially because I could see he understood the character fully.

"He wanted to play Stick as Stick, he didn't want to turn Stick into Burt Reynolds."

Stick opens this fall.

Reynolds plays an ex-convict who becomes a Miami chauffeur; his employer is played by George Segal (left).

CLOAK & DAGG[illegible]R

Henry Thomas and Dabney Coleman [illegible] father and son — and something else [illegible] ry's imagination.

(Continued from page 5)

motivation all the time, which is [illegible] hard when you're making a fantasy.

"Dabney plays Jack Flack with qu[illegible] of humor," Franklin nonetheless [illegible] miringly of his adult star, "although [illegible] any way parodistically. The scene i[illegible] piest with is the one in which he 'i[illegible] Davey (Thomas) in driving a car. [illegible] out that since he's only a figm[illegible] Davey's imagination, he knows n[illegible] about driving than Davey does. 'W[illegible] should *I* know?' he asks Davey. 'I[illegible] fantasy character!'"

Set in San Antonio — coincident[illegible] younger star's hometown — *Cloak a[illegible] ger* features exteriors of that city[illegible] famous monument. But when it ca[illegible] to shoot *in*side the Alamo, local [illegible] said no go. "Apparently," Franklin [illegible] "this went back to a time several ye[illegible] when an Italian film crew hammered [illegible] lights into the wall. We assured them [illegible] with the new film stocks, we didn't need to use lights at all, but they didn't believe us. So we had to build a replica of the interior. It's so good that I'm sure the San Antonio authorities, when they see it, will think we somehow managed to sneak in!"

With the help of a twenty-eight-acre nylon and polyester tarpaulin, a nighttime scene in which a van that's chasing our heroes crashes into the front of a downtown San Antonio jewelry shop was shot in the brightest part of a summer afternoon on the Universal lot's "New York Street." Number Richard Franklin among the tarpaulin's biggest fans. "It was terrific being able to shoot that way," he says. "In fact, I don't know what we'd have done without it, since night shooting is normally very unpleasant, and kids are rarely allowed to work late enough to get anything done."

But the scene in which Henry-as-Davey sees an FBI agent being murdered in the mirrored side of the building opposite the one he's in was as devilishly tricky to shoot as the van-crashing scene was simple. "What was tricky," Franklin recalls, shaking his head with the memory, "was that from the angles we wanted, we kept getting the cameras in the shot. Normally when that happens, one puts black velvet all around the camera, but that didn't work in this case. We had to construct miniatures of the area that would have been reflected if the camera hadn't been there and place them around the camera, turning it into a miniature stairwell. In the reflection you really can't detect the camera, but it's sitting right in the middle of frame."

Cloak and Dagger, opening Aug[illegible] presents an opportunity to see [illegible] America's favorite boy actor at work [illegible] as well as Dabney Coleman having [illegible] fun playing something other than [illegible] venal, vainglorious Merle Jeeter or [illegible] Bill-style jerk, at which he's become [illegible] America's favorite *adult* actors.

previews

The Breakfast Club

Molly Ringwald, currently visible on screens in **Sixteen Candles,** will again star in a "teenage" movie written, directed and co-produced by John Hughes (the man behind **Sixteen Candles**). **Breakfast Club,** opening later this year, is about five kids who have Saturday detention at a Chicago high school (the entire film takes place from 8 a.m. until everyone goes home at 5 p.m.). But it's not about detention, of course; it's about awkward adolescence, and how teenagers are often more mature than adults. Starring with Ms. Ringwald are Emilio Estevez (son of actor Martin Sheen, and an off-screen friend of Molly's), Paul Gleason, Anthony Michael Hall (who also appeared in **Sixteen Candles**), Rick Moranis (of *SCTV* fame) and Ally Sheedy, who enhanced **War Games. Breakfast Club** is produced by Ned Tanen and John Hughes, and it marks the first effort by A&M Films to reach the screen (A&M being, of course, a major independent record label).

Breakfast Club ***unites writer-director John Hughes (below right) and star Molly Ringwald (below left) once again (their first collaboration was* Sixteen Candles*). This time Molly is one of five Chicago high school students forced to endure Saturday detention.***

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